

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

County & Agency Name: **Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) /Social Services Branch**
Child Welfare Services (CWS)

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This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for state on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program area in developing local disaster readiness plans.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced
Process Description:	In the event of a disaster, Humboldt County Social Services/CWS and the Probation Department have an identification and location process of children in care that may be displaced in affected areas. This process involves using a monthly updated child placement information list (Business Objects generated report called <i>Emergency Contact List</i>). This <i>Emergency Contact List</i> includes child name and placement address (including zip code), caregiver name and phone numbers, assigned social workers and supervisors. Future possible improvement to the Business Objects Report could include ICPC, medical alert information, parent contact and emergency contact information.

	<p>This list is updated monthly by the designated CWS Administrative Analyst and given to a Social Services representative for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), who takes it to the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to be stored in the EOC (Attachment A). The list is also made available to CWS clerical and the On-Call/On-Duty supervisor/social worker kits. The updated list is stored electronically on the CWS network server share drive. As well, the SafeMeasures mapping tool will be used to identify and locate the CWS children affected by a disaster. On a weekly basis, the Probation Department Family Reunification Unit provides Juvenile Hall and On-Call Probation officer with a list of minors in placement and with parent phone numbers.</p> <p>In the event of a disaster, a designated CWS Program Administrator is given responsibility for communicating with the EOC representatives for Social Services and coordinating with the CWS Disaster Responding Staff. The Disaster Responding Staff will implement the CWS disaster response plan in affected areas. The response plan involves establishing contact (by phone or in-person) with the caregivers, to ensure the safety of the children and if relocation/services may be needed.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	<p>If care providers affected by the disaster do not call in, or contact by phone is not possible, then CWS will attempt contact in-person and, if necessary, law enforcement assistance will be requested. If needed, CWS will communicate with the media to inform care providers of emergency services and ways to get in touch with CWS.</p> <p>CWS has a dedicated phone line ([707] 268-2157) available to care providers affected by the disaster to call and leave voice messages regarding their name, location, the child(ren) in their care and whether they need services. In the event of a declared emergency/disaster, this number can also be utilized by staff for checking in, identifying location and their availability for case work or any other related information. The outgoing message on this phone line will be updated with directives by DHHS and Social Services Branch, in coordination with the activated EOC regarding areas affected by the disaster, shelters that are open, and where to go to receive help. Messages to this phone line will be updated as needed and checked/tracked hourly by the supervisor and social workers On-Call (after business hours) and On-Duty (during business hours), or as otherwise assigned by CWS.</p> <p>A cover letter with information about what to do in the case of a disaster, will be mailed to existing foster care providers and also will be included in placement packets for new care providers. This information will also include a list of shelters, emergency information (names, phone numbers, procedure, etc), <u>and</u> a magnet for the home with the CWS/Probation dedicated emergency phone number (Attachment B). Foster care providers are informed to contact the CWS dedicated phone line as soon as possible with their status in the case of a declared disaster and to provide CWS with their written disaster plan using state form LIC 610B (Emergency Plan for Foster Family Homes). Probation care providers will be provided with the same information.</p>

Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	<p>The designated CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), to provide disaster related information and evacuation routes in affected areas. Public emergency alert information will be provided on radio broadcasts over emergency response channels. Care providers will be referred to the Red Cross evacuation and shelter plan already in place. Probation activities are to be coordinated by the Probation Department Facility Emergency Coordinator.</p> <p>Evacuation procedures are identified in the Humboldt Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan and the Humboldt County General Emergency Action Plan, also the County Facility Emergency Action Plan.</p>
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	<p>The same procedures will be followed as in #3. The designated CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES), to provide disaster related information and evacuation routes if needed. Public emergency alert information will be provided on radio broadcasts over emergency response channels. Care providers will be referred to the Red Cross evacuation and shelter plan already in place. Probation activities are to be coordinated by the Probation Department Facility Emergency Coordinator.</p> <p>Evacuation procedures are identified in the Humboldt Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan and the Humboldt County General Emergency Action Plan, also the County Facility Emergency Action Plan.</p>
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	<p>The designated CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate with the EOC to provide disaster related information and established shelter sites. The county has an agreement with the Humboldt County Chapter of American Red Cross to provide mass care and shelter to families and individuals impacted by a disaster. Sites have been designated throughout the County as possible shelter sites. Major sites include local schools and county fairgrounds (Attachment C).</p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	<p>As soon as possible after ensuring the safety of children in care, social workers and probation officers that are assigned to the specific children/youth will make reasonable efforts to contact by phone or in-person the parents and/or legal guardians (that have not called in) regarding their child's safety and condition. In the future, the CWS Emergency Contact List (Business Objects report) will include parent names and phone numbers. The Probation list already includes parent name and phone numbers and is implemented as described in Part A, Item 1.</p>

Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	<p>Services during a disaster situation will be provided according to EOC and DHHS identified priorities of critical services, including medical, mental health, social services, and other special needs. EOC representatives will coordinate services with the Disaster Responding Staff of Humboldt County DHHS Branches (Social Services, Public Health, Mental Health) and Probation to provide alternative processes for providing continued services, and in accordance with NIMS/SEMS procedures. Staff will be assigned to duties relevant to the disaster and may be required to assist in a variety of ways. If no staff is available within the County Branches, EOC will contact other counties, the Region, and the State as needed.</p> <p><u>Mental Health Services:</u> a) CWS and Probation will contact Children, Youth, and Families Services (CYFS) Division of Mental Health and CYFS will assign available staff.</p> <p><u>Public Health Services:</u> a) CWS and Probation will contact PHB clinical staff to coordinate access to needed medications.</p> <p><u>Social Services:</u> a) Services specific to Social Services will be coordinated directly with available staff and chain of command, in cooperation with EOC procedures b) At this time a majority of Aid to Adoptions cases are direct deposit. Foster Care families are printed a check and are reliant on the mail system.</p>
Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	<p>Staff are notified that during a declared disaster their role includes being a disaster response worker. Available staff reports to their Supervisor or next higher available Supervisor. After business hours, any available staff report to their Supervisor within 24 hours, if possible. CWS staff phone numbers (work, home and cell) are updated regularly by CWS Clerical and made available to staff and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).</p> <p>Available managers and supervisors, as part of the designated CWS Disaster Responding Staff, will receive directives in accordance with chain of command and NIMS/SEMS procedures. The CWS Disaster Responding Staff will activate the phone tree to contact assigned staff, determine availability (if worker has not yet made contact), allocate duties and make client contacts. See staff phone tree and communication structure (Attachment D). Probation staff utilizes chain of command for assignment of staff in absence of assigned staff person. Also, refer to the Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS)/National Incident Management System (NIMS) for communication and assignment procedures.</p>
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	<p>Follow <i>current policy and procedures</i> as much as possible. If a social worker calls CWS and states that they are unavailable for case work, the cases/families in their caseload will be reassigned to another available worker. Probation staff utilizes chain of command for assignment of staff in absence of assigned staff person.</p>

	The CWS and the Probation Disaster Responding Staff will determine critical cases and priorities based on safety food, shelter, medical, and special needs.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	Depending on the scale of the disaster and if safety is a concern, alternative locations for operations will be determined by DHHS/Social Services, in coordination with the EOC and OES, and implemented by the CWS Disaster Responding Staff. Refer also to EOC procedures and Humboldt Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The CWS/Probation dedicated phone line will have updated information on alternative locations for operations, as needed.
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	<p>CWS and Probation will provide disaster plan training to staff on a periodic basis. The Disaster Responding Staff, supervisors and other designated staff will also receive county emergency preparedness training, including Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS)/National Incident Management System (NIMS).</p> <p>The CWS Disaster Plan is made available to all CWS staff on the share drive of CWS computers. CWS Supervisors will review the CWS Disaster Response Plan with staff annually and provide training at supervisor meetings, unit meetings, and during new worker training.</p> <p>Emergency preparedness information is provided to care providers by mail (letters, newsletters) and in the placement packet to new care providers at the time of placement of a child. This information includes disaster response information, the dedicated phone number to call for updates and to provide status/location, shelter sites, and a list of emergency kit items (Attachment B). Also, care providers receive disaster planning information at the Foster Care Orientation (PRIDE) and in the Foster Parent Manual.</p>
CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:	Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare reports in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	Providing emergency response and essential services will be top priority in the event of a disaster. CWS investigation policies and procedures will be followed as much as possible. Overall, Department procedures are covered in the EOC procedures and Humboldt Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	Providing emergency response and essential services will be top priority in the event of a disaster. CWS will implement new services according to standard policies and procedures as much as possible. Overall, Department procedures are covered in the EOC procedures and Humboldt Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan.

CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:	Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure - staff
Process Description:	<p>The CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate communication among staff as needed and will track the list of people who have not contacted their supervisor. Communication structure is generally according to chain of command (or next higher available in command) unless otherwise directed: line-level employees report to supervisors; supervisors report to program managers; and program managers report to the deputy director. In the event that directives are passed on from EOC Director, the deputy director will contact the program managers; the program managers will contact the supervisors and so on until the information is disseminated to everyone regarding that directive. Probation staff will also utilize chain of command for assignment of staff in absence of assigned worker.</p> <p>Humboldt County DHHS has a dedicated phone line ([707] 268-2157) available to care providers to call and leave voice messages regarding their status. In the event of a declared emergency/disaster, this number can also be utilized by staff for checking in, identifying location and their availability for case work or any other related information. The outgoing message on this phone line will be updated with directives by DHHS and Social Services Branch, in coordination with the activated EOC, regarding disaster response information.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	<p>CWS staff phone numbers for work, cell, and home are updated by CWS clerical as changes occur and the list is made available to staff. Juvenile Hall maintains an updated home phone number list for Probation Department staff. In the event of a disaster, the CWS Disaster Responding Staff will activate the phone tree and assign roles as needed. The phone tree system is utilized to activate emergency response assistance in accordance with chain of command and NIMS/SEMS procedures (i.e. EOC Representatives from Social Services will maintain communication with Social Services designated Disaster Responding Staff).</p> <p>In the event of a declared disaster, staff reports to their supervisor or next higher available supervisor during business hours. After business hours, any available staff reports to their supervisor within 24 hours, if possible. Available managers and supervisors, as part of the CWS Disaster Responding Staff, will utilize the phone tree to contact assigned/available staff, allocate duties and make client contacts. When communication is not possible by telephone, cell phone or e-mail, all employees are expected to listen to the Emergency Alert System on news radio stations to learn about the disaster and instructions for reporting to work.</p>

Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	<p>Contracted service agencies (i.e. Environmental Alternatives) complete the LIC 610B form <i>Emergency Plan for Foster Family Homes</i> with the families at the time of placement and it is posted in the home (Attachment E). This is a requirement of Title 22 California Licensing Department, under Section 3. Emergency contact information is on the form, including the agency social worker and CWS social worker/or probation officer phone numbers.</p> <p>The CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate with contracted service providers and the EOC to provide contracted services in times of emergency. Contact lists for all contracted service providers are maintained by CWS program analysts. Contracted services will be provided to the extent that it is available and possible.</p>
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	When all normal channels of communication are unavailable, the Sheriff's OES, in coordination with EOC, will provide alternative communication by requesting ham radio operators or other communication methods, such as hardwire FAX, mobile satellite phones, county hand held radios, signs and notices. Probation officers and juvenile corrections officers also have access to public safety radios. The public will be instructed by OES to listen for disaster related information on the Emergency Alert System on local news radio stations.
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	Employees should check in with their supervisor within 24 hours of the disaster and then two times daily thereafter, if possible. Intra-agency communication frequency will be determined by the Sheriff's OES in coordination with EOC and DHHS Disaster Responding Staff.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	In accordance with chain of command and NIMS/SEMS procedures, directives will be given to the Public Information Officer in the EOC and the DHHS Public Education and Outreach officers, who will coordinate to inform the public of emergency services and ways to make contact with CWS.
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	Representatives from Social Services and American Red Cross will be situated at the EOC, where they can address emergency response issues and communicate with volunteers at designated shelters and other locations. Social Services representative at the EOC will also work in coordinating the activities of other voluntary organization including Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) and Salvation Army.

Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	<p>Social Services Branch has a published public reception telephone number (800-891-8551). DHHS will explore the possibility of establishing voicemail for this 800 phone number or transferring messages to the dedicated emergency phone line (707-268-2157) in the event of a disaster.</p> <p>CWS and Juvenile Hall have 24-hour emergency/reporting lines that will accept collect calls.</p>
CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:	Preserve essential program records
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	<p>Physical records are retained on all clients. CWS also maintains electronic client records in CWS/CMS with off-site back-up capability. Probation has some electronic records of clients.</p> <p>Document imaging for all CWS paper cases is in the development process. Probation is developing a case management system with document imaging capability.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	<p>Three On-Call laptops (with jump drive, power supply, log on credentials, and documentation) are available for CWS to complete case work. Analog phone line is needed for the laptops for extended use and to dial in and connect to CWS/CMS (which is maintained in Sacramento). If the CWS/CMS database is unavailable, case work will revert to the employee completing paperwork. There are also several Quickpads available to staff to type case narratives, etc. Probation utilizes paper records and electronic back-up is not necessary for case notes. Once web-based case management system is in place (possibly FY2010), laptops and/or paper record keeping will be used as back-up.</p>
CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:	Coordinate services and share information with other states:
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
Process Description:	<p>CWS has policies and procedures that address the Interstate Compact for Placement of Children (ICPC) – (see Attachment F). The CWS and the Probation Disaster Responding Staff will work with the ICPC Coordinator for identifying and tracking ICPC children, and then will notify the State of California ICPC Administrator.</p>

Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	In the event of a declared disaster, the Disaster Responding Staff from Social Services and Mental Health Branches will be available at the County's EOC to discuss and coordinate the need for necessary mental health services. CWS also has co-located Mental Health staff for coordination of services.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	The CWS Disaster Responding Staff will work in coordination with EOC and the Court regarding disaster response efforts. Also, Business Continuity Plans will be developed by Risk Management for the Courts.
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	<p>The CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate with EOC and DHHS to convey local needs to federal agencies. When Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) responds to the disaster, their representative may be located in the EOC or be readily available to representatives located there.</p> <p>Continue CLETS procedure, if possible, with local law enforcement or by telephone.</p>
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	The CWS Disaster Responding Staff will coordinate with EOC representatives from Social Services in order to communicate information and local needs with CDSS. CDSS will be notified of the CWS Disaster Response Plan procedures and the dedicated phone line.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	Humboldt County has eight federally-recognized tribes located within its boundaries. Assigned staff will contact the tribes individually in the event of a disaster regarding the safety and well-being of Native American children that fall under the Indian Child Welfare Act. Court records or CWS/CMS will be reviewed for identification of children and assigned Social Worker/Probation staff.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	American Red Cross will work with the EOC and the Volunteer Center of the Redwoods (V-COR), a Volunteer Organization Active in Disasters (VOAD), to coordinate volunteer services.